

## **AAVLD Travel Policy – Effective August 1, 2019**

### General Guidelines

All travel conducted on behalf of AAVLD shall be for the direct benefit of the organization and shall be completed using economical options that will satisfactorily accomplish the goals of the organization.

Original receipts (or scanned copies) shall be submitted for all travel reimbursements except per diem meal claims. If a receipt is lost by the traveler, every effort should be made to obtain a replicate receipt from the vendor. If a receipt cannot be obtained, a description of the charge and any other proof of charge shall be submitted with the reimbursement request (e.g. – credit card statement showing charge).

Reimbursements can be paid to either the traveler or the traveler's company/organization. If the reimbursement request is submitted by the traveler's company/organization, in addition to the reimbursement claim form, an invoice from the company/organization shall also be submitted with instructions for payment.

For salaried employees, a travel work day conforms to the needs of the business trip. For hourly employees, the paid hours shall correspond to the actual travel time and on site duty hours only.

### Air Travel

The traveler should purchase the most economical airline fare available that accommodates the destination and the traveler's schedule. Travelers should investigate numerous flight options, including different airline companies and different travel itineraries. Unless there is a compelling reason to do so, non-refundable fares shall be purchased. Generally, roundtrip fares are purchased although one way fares may be purchased to accommodate the business schedule. Flights should be purchased a minimum of 4 weeks in advance. Airline reservations can be made by the traveler, AAVLD staff or the traveler's organization/company.

Airline itinerary change fees may be reimbursed, if there is a compelling reason to change the flight itinerary. Typically, this would be due to a schedule change made by or on behalf of AAVLD. Change fees not related to a significant schedule change or a personal emergency will not be reimbursed. This includes changes made for convenience reasons, such as flights changed to depart earlier on the scheduled day of departure. If a change is made and costs are incurred, the traveler shall submit information on the change to the Executive Director to determine if AAVLD will reimburse for the costs.

Seats may be reserved prior to the flight but shall not exceed \$50 per seat selection.

Travelers will be reimbursed for baggage fees of one bag per trip. Bags should not exceed the airline weight or size requirements (typically 50lbs) – additional fees due to exceeding weigh/size requirements will not be reimbursed. Fees for additional bags will be reimbursed if the traveler is transporting AAVLD related equipment, training materials or supplies.

### Ground Transportation

Mileage is reimbursed at a rate consistent with the IRS business mileage reimbursement rate.

When a traveler chooses to drive to the destination, the traveler will be reimbursed for the cost of actual roundtrip mileage or the amount of the cost of roundtrip airfare, whichever is lower.

### Rental Cars

The traveler shall purchase the cheapest rental car fare available that accommodates the destination, number of passengers and the traveler's schedule. Travelers should investigate numerous car rental options, including different rental companies. If needed for AAVLD Accreditation Program site visits, rental car pooling is required for the site visit team members.

Insurance should be purchased through the rental car agency, if the traveler is not covered by their personal/company/organization. If purchasing insurance is necessary, the traveler will be reimbursed for the cost of the insurance.

Fuel may be pre-purchased (full tank) at time of pick-up or purchased at a gas station prior to returning the car. Travelers should avoid returning cars without full fuel tanks (if gas is not pre-purchased) as the charge from the rental agency will far exceed normal cost of fuel.

### Lodging

Travelers should explore options for lodging in an effort to keep costs low for the organization. Lodging is expected at the AAVLD arranged hotel related with the business activity -whenever this option is available. Travelers may be reimbursed for lodging one day before and/or after their scheduled trip based on travel convenience (example – staying at a hotel close to the airport the evening prior to an early departure). For AAVLD Accreditation Program site visits, lodging on site is provided by the laboratory being audited and will not be reimbursed to the site visit team member.

### Meals and Incidental Expenses

Meals and incidental expenses will be reimbursed at the AAVLD established per diem rate (current rates will be shown on the AAVLD Travel Reimbursement Form). Receipts for meals are not required when claiming the per diem rates. Meals and incidental expenses will be reimbursed according to the start and finish times of the trip. If the travel time covers only one meal period a half day shall be claimed. If the travel time covers two or three meal periods then a full day shall be claimed.

### Allowable Expenses

- Registration fees
- Commercial transportation (shuttles, taxis)
- Parking fees
- Toll road charges
- Rental car
- Mileage to meeting
- Communication charges (telephone, internet)
- Laundry service if the trip is 7 days or longer
- Airline baggage and seat selection fees (described above)
- Rental car and insurance (described above)
- Meals and incidental expenses by per diem
- Mileage to airport

### Unallowable Expenses

The following expenses are not authorized:

- Travel insurance, airline trip insurance
- Personal or incidental expenses (covered by per diem reimbursement)

### Travel Documentation and Reimbursement

All travel reimbursements shall be submitted on official AAVLD reimbursement forms (kept current by calendar year) to the AAVLD Executive Director Assistant by email or mail and final approval is by the Secretary Treasurer. Receipts shall be included, with the exception of mileage and per diem costs. Either hard copy or electronically scanned receipts are permitted (the latter is preferred).

Reimbursements are processed by AAVLD within 3 weeks of receipt. Once the reimbursements are processed, AAVLD submits the reimbursement to the bank for processing, which can take an additional week. Reimbursements will be issued as a mailed check or as a direct deposit.